

REMARKS

Claims 26-50 are pending. Applicant has amended claims 26, 30, 38, and 46.

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for his consideration during the telephone interview of December 29, 2005. During that interview, applicant's representative explained that claim 30 is directed to a "controlling client computer system" providing to a "server computer" authentication methodologies that are to be used to authenticate a "client computer system." Applicant's representative further explained that the term "controlling client computer system" designates a computer system other than the "client computer system." The Examiner pointed to applicant's specification where it describes that a "controlling client computer system" can also provide to the server computer authentication methodologies for authenticating the "controlling client computer system" itself. Applicant has amended the claims to explicitly recite that the "controlling client computer system" and the "client computer system" are different computer systems.

The Examiner has rejected claims 26-33, 35, 38-41, 43, and 46-49 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Wood and claims 34, 36-37, 42, 44-45, and 50 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wood and what the Examiner believes is prior art that has been admitted by applicant. Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

With respect to comments made by the Examiner in the office action of November 23, 2005, the Examiner is correct in that Wood describes that a user is provided with suitable authentication schemes and allowed to select one of the suitable authentication schemes. A suitable authentication scheme is based on the trust level that is needed for a user to access a resource. A suitable authentication scheme is, however, not based on the user's authentication abilities. Wood's technique, thus, requires a user to make the selection of the authentication scheme that is appropriate to the user's own "authentication abilities". This user selection may be acceptable when the user is very sophisticated and understands the differences between the suitable authentication schemes (e.g., digital certificate and enigma challenge) and knows their own authentication abilities. Wood's

technique, however, is not very useful to an unsophisticated user and cannot be used when the client computer system has no current user (e.g., a program that runs automatically late at night).

Claim 30, as an example, is directed to a technique for authenticating "client computer systems" without requiring a user or the client computer system to make a selection at the time of authentication. According to claim 30, "a server computer" receives from "a controlling client computer system" an instruction that indicates an authentication methodology that is to be used to authenticate "a client computer system." Thus, claim 30 recites three different computers: a server computer, a controlling client computer system, and a client computer system. The controlling client computer system provides the server computer with an indication of the authentication methodology to be used to authenticate the client computer system. Thus, the invention of claim 30 is particularly useful when a user is unsophisticated or when the client computer system has no current user.

In rejecting claim 30, the Examiner appears to not have considered that the "controlling client computer system" is different from the "client computer system" and that the controlling client computer system (and not the client computer system) provides the indication of the authentication methodology for the client computer system. Applicant has amended all the independent claims to make this distinction more explicit.

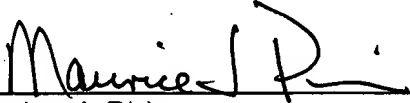
In addition, each of the claims recites that the authentication methodologies are based on the "authentication abilities" of the client computer system. Wood's neither teaches nor suggests that the authentication methodologies provided by the authorization component to the login component are based on the authentication abilities of the user. (Wood, 11:30-51.) Rather, Wood allows a user to select one of the schemes from the suitable authentication schemes for which the user has the appropriate credentials. Thus, Wood forces the user to select the scheme that is appropriate to the user's ability. Moreover, the claims recite a novel combination of elements that is not taught or suggested by the relied-upon references.

Based upon these remarks and amendments, applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application and its early allowance. If the Examiner has any questions or believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned at (206) 359-8548.

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2/8/04

Respectfully submitted,

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